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(Speech delivered at a meeting of active party members, Moscow, May 22, 1933)

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PARTY PURGING

Of the 3,200,000 members and candidates in our Party, almost half, (approximately 1,500,000, of whom 250,000 are members and 1,250,000 are candidates) have never gone through a Party purging. This alone shows what enormous significance the purging of the Party has in raising the members and candidates of the Party to a higher ideological political level. Each one of these 3,200,000 persons will separately come on to the platform and report to the Party, to scores of millions of non-Party workers, and give reasons why they deserve the right to bear the name of member of a great party; they will report on their work, will explain how they understand the tasks that confront the Party, and show whether they are prepared to continue to fight for the cause of the Party, for the cause of the working class.

The history of political parties knows no examples of the power and might that our Party displays in the very process of purging. And this is not an accident. This is inherent in the very nature of our Party and this is what distinguishes it from all political parties in the world that have existed before and that exist now. The structure of our Party, the methods of its work, the position and duties of every single member of the Party flow entirely from the great aims which the Party has set itself and which it is achieving.

Our Party is a fighting association of men and women

who think in the same way and belong to a definite class, *viz.*, the class of revolutionary proletarians; it is a voluntary association which has set itself the aim of abolishing capitalism and of establishing a new system of human society, the system of communism. It is an association which subordinates the interests of individual members to the interests of the whole, to the interests of the whole Party, to the interests of the whole class. It is an association that is bound by iron discipline, the foundation of the existence of a fighting Party. It is an association that thinks and acts as one, it is an association that fights against every manifestation of discord in its ranks, against indiscipline, against petty-bourgeois wavering and hesitation which undermines the fighting capacity of the Party.

"The Party is a voluntary association which would inevitably fall to pieces, at first ideologically and then materially, if it did not purge itself of members who advocate anti-Party views. The instruments that serve to determine the boundary between a Party member and an anti-Party member are the Party program, the tactical resolutions of the Party and its rules . . ." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, "Party Organization and Party Literature," Vol. VIII, p. 389, Russian edition.)

To purge the ranks of the Party is as necessary a process as purging a healthy body of unhealthy elements.

Before the Revolution the purging of the Party ranks mostly took place spontaneously, as it were. The very circumstances of the time, the very conditions in which the Party existed, facilitated the natural purging of our ranks. Indeed, the fight under the conditions of tsarism, persecution and privation put a man in such conditions in which he had to be very clear in his mind as to what to be prepared for. Young people, a young lad or young girl of 17 or 18 years of age, in taking the path of revolutionary struggle, had to decide to

subordinate their personal interests to the common interests of the revolutionary movement, to the interest of proletarian revolution, to the interest of Communism. These people were prepared to go to prison, to penal servitude, to Siberia. They lived under the severe conditions of the "underground." That is why, before the Revolution, the process of Party purging took place without any special purge. It took place largely by the process of natural selection, so to speak. The weak retired. They were not combed out by any special process of purging; they combed themselves out.

Of course, after the October Revolution, after the capture of power, alien elements attached themselves to us. The Party energetically fought against careerists and self-seekers who tried to get into positions of power. Then the civil war commenced and the fighting fronts were formed. The life and death struggle commenced against Kaledin, against the Czecho-Slovaks, against Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich, the Poles and Wrangel. In those trying days the fighting at the fronts prevented self-seekers and careerists from penetrating into the Party. In those days, when Denikin was approaching Tula, the Party organized a Party Week and accepted tens of thousands of workers who willingly and voluntarily joined the Party in order to fight against the enemies of the Soviet Government. But even in those days the Party did not for one moment abate its struggle against alien elements in its ranks who were undermining the fighting capacity of our Party and the State, who violated discipline, and who placed their personal interests above the interests of defending our proletarian country, above the interests of the Revolution.

When the civil war came to an end the situation changed. The Party proclaimed the New Economic Policy. In these conditions the Party had to put up

determined resistance to the self-seeking and careerist elements which had penetrated into the Party. A stronger fight than ever had to be waged for the consistency of the Party ranks, against petty-bourgeois strivings to weaken the proletarian dictatorship. All the Oppositions of that time, from the Trotskyists, Democratic-Centralists and the so-called "Workers' Opposition" to their avowed counter-revolutionary ramifications (the Miasnikovists and others) all represented the bourgeois and petty bourgeois attack upon the Party, upon the dictatorship of the proletariat. As a matter of fact, they all led towards the restoration of capitalism. The Party at that time not only resolutely repelled all these Oppositions, not only smashed all these forces of the past, but proclaimed a general purging of the Party ranks of alien and self-seeking elements.

At the beginning of the Party purging in 1921, the number of members and candidates in the Party was 660,000. In the course of the purging 175,000 or about 26 per cent of the whole membership were combed out, or left the Party voluntarily. Although the Party membership was reduced by over one-fourth, the Party became much stronger.

The second Party purging, which was only partial, took place in 1924, when the Party nuclei in Soviet institutions and universities were purged; and in 1925 the rural Party nuclei were overhauled. This was at the height of the period of the New Economic Policy, the period of the revival of the petty-bourgeois elements both in town and country, the period in which these petty-bourgeois elements began to come out under a "Left" flag. This was the period of the second round of bourgeois and petty-bourgeois attacks upon the foundations of the dictatorship of the proletariat, camouflaged with "Left" phrases about democracy.

The XIII Congress of our Party, in its resolution on

the "Immediate Tasks of Party Construction" declared:

"The Party has already commenced the special work of overhauling and improving non-working class Party nuclei. The object of this overhauling is first of all to purge the Party of socially alien and degenerate elements and also to purge the Party of those non-working class elements which during the period they have been in the Party have not revealed themselves as communists in the effort to improve the work of the State, economic, or other organizations, and which did not have direct contact with the masses of the workers and peasants."

The Trotskyists, seizing upon any fact they could to attack the Party, repeated the common, bourgeois, banal legend about our Party and tried to make it appear that the Party purging was a factional weapon used by the majority of the Party against the minority.

At the XIII Party Congress, Comrade Stalin, in replying to Comrade Preobrazhensky said:

"Comrade Preobrazhensky thinks that the Party purging is a weapon in the hands of the majority of the Party against the Opposition and apparently he does not approve of the purging method. This is a question of principle. The profound mistake that Comrade Preobrazhensky makes is that he does not understand that unless the Party is periodically purged of wavering elements the Party cannot fortify itself."

At every historical stage that the Party raised its work to a new level, these wavering petty-bourgeois elements began to hamper its movements. The periodical purging of the Party of alien, wavering, petty-bourgeois elements is always an essential condition for the successful fulfilment by the Party of its militant tasks.

That was the case in 1929 when the Party commenced the extended socialist offensive along the whole front and when resistance to this extended socialist offensive was put up by the reactionary elements in

our Party who had formed the Right deviation. When they, following the example of the Trotskyists, began to violate the iron discipline of the Party, began to oppose the policy pursued by the Party, to advocate a kulak, anti-Party policy, when they tried to dampen the enthusiasm of the masses of the workers in socialist competition and shock-brigade work—as for example, the Right deviationist, craft unionist, trade union leaders did—the Party not only put up a fight against them, but in retaliation to this new, hostile attack, organized the purging of its ranks in order successfully to carry out its offensive against the capitalist elements along the whole front.

Speaking of the Party purging in 1929 at the April (1929) Plenum of the Central Committee, Comrade Stalin said:

"Finally, the slogan of purging the Party. It would be ridiculous to think that it is possible to strengthen our soviet, economic, trade union and co-operative organizations, that it is possible to purge them of the evil of bureaucracy, without putting a fine edge on the Party itself. There can be no doubt that bureaucratic elements flourish not only in the economic, co-operative, trade union and soviet organizations, but in the organizations of the Party itself. Since the Party is the controlling force of all these organizations, it is obvious that to purge the Party of undesirable elements is an essential condition for the reinvigoration and improvement of all the other working class organizations. Hence the slogan of purging the Party."

It is precisely because the Party has managed firmly and undeviatingly to maintain the purity and consistency of its ranks, it is precisely because the Party has fought firmly against all Right and "Left" deviationist elements, against the "marsh" and against all instability, that we managed to carry out the great and grand historical tasks that were imposed upon us by the first Five-Year Plan. We were able to smash the Ramzins

and the kulaks only because our Party, under the leadership of its Leninist Central Committee, was able to fortify its ranks, was able, irrespective of persons, to purge itself of all those who departed from Leninism and of those who, like the Mensheviks, betraying the interests of the proletarian revolution, became champions within the Party of the interests of the classes hostile to the proletariat.

The Party leadership, the leadership of the Central Committee, acquired greater strength because it won the confidence of the masses and gained the leadership of millions, because this leadership managed throughout the years of the dictatorship of the proletariat to remain true to the foundations laid down by Lenin at the time our Party was born and which were further developed in the course of its history, because after Lenin, the great Marxian-Leninist, Comrade Stalin, came to the head of our Party and managed as unswervingly as Lenin to fight against opportunism of all colours and secure for the Party the great historical victories of the first Five-Year Plan. *(Loud applause)*

II.

THE SPECIAL FEATURES AND TASKS OF THE PURGING IN 1933

The history of humanity has not known such rapid and profound fundamental changes in the economy of a country as we have brought about during the past five years.

The great victories we have achieved in the socialist reconstruction of the country determine the whole of the present-day economic and political situation. It is quite natural that such a gigantic, turbulent, revolutionary growth should give rise to certain difficulties. Even our enemies are obliged to admit our absolutely indisputable and obvious victories. Our enemies try to console themselves by the existence of difficulties, they try to magnify them in every way and zealously try to gloss over the fundamental fact that our difficulties arise from our growth, that they are fundamentally different from those, I would not say difficulties, but agonies, which the capitalist world is now suffering. There are individuals in our ranks who do not always properly understand the nature of our difficulties. Marx, Lenin and Stalin taught and teach us to see the contradictions that are inherent in life itself. It also ought to be perfectly clear to us that our victories in the sphere of socialist construction not only do not exclude, but even presuppose, certain difficulties and defects. The whole point is to understand the nature of

these difficulties, to understand that they are difficulties of growth.

If, for example, we did not have at the present time a powerful industry, gigantic tractor and automobile works, metallurgical and engineering works, coal mines, state farms and collective farms, the quality of our difficulties would be of an altogether different character. They would have been difficulties that could be characterized by the question: to be or not to be? This would be a question of life or death for the proletarian revolution; it would be a question of the very existence of our Party.

Can the various difficulties which we are experiencing in the process of socialist construction in any way be compared with what would have been the position had the Party taken the treacherous road of the Trotskyists and the Right deviationists? Not only would we not have had any growth in our socialist country, any growth of our Party; we would have had the collapse of the Soviet State, the collapse of our Party as a proletarian party.

A petty-bourgeois phrase-monger, a formal-thinking schematist might think that we are contradicting ourselves. "You speak of achievements and growth," he will say, "and yet at the same time you are about to proceed to purge the Party of alien and self-seeking elements." But such a schematic view is doomed to failure. The Party raises the question of purging its ranks, not because it is weak, but because it is mighty and strong.

We take into account the fact that the enormous growth of our Party and the new and complicated problems that confront us in the new stage of the struggle, in the conditions when we are carrying out the second Five-Year Plan, call for a fresh overhauling of our ranks, and for the purging of the Party of alien

elements which inevitably penetrate into the ranks of the Party that stands at the head of the greatest State in the world.

The growth of socialist economy, and the numerical growth of the working class and collective farmers, have resulted in an unprecedented increase in the Party membership. In the course of two and a half years the membership of the Party increased by 1,400,000. This testifies to the enormous confidence, love and support which the broad masses of the workers and collective farmers entertain towards the Party. The Party knows this, and the Party is proud of it. But our Party has always distinguished itself, and now distinguishes itself by the fact that it never suffered from the petty-bourgeois weakness of allowing ourselves to be carried away by our successes; it has always been able, and is now able, in a Marxist, Leninist, Stalinist way to analyse facts, to look soberly upon its achievements and growth and soberly take difficulties and defects into account.

It is precisely on the basis of this sober analysis that the Party calculates that, notwithstanding our achievements, notwithstanding the fact that we have defeated the kulaks, notwithstanding the fact that in the main we have liquidated the kulaks as a class in the principal grain regions of the U.S.S.R., notwithstanding the great victories achieved in the collective farm movement, and notwithstanding the fact that we have torn up capitalism by the roots, these roots still exist, the class war still continues and will continue in acute forms.

Irreconcilable struggle against all opportunist, deviationist and "marsh" elements which are trying to drag us back, is being waged and will continue to be waged by the Party with all the intensity and firmness with which it has been waged up till now. The Party

sees all the manoeuvres of the class enemy and of its agents who have penetrated into the Party, and it sees his ability to adapt himself.

The kulak is altering his tactics. He sees that the collective farms are winning, that he cannot fight against them. The kulak realizes that he is living his last days and naturally he is prepared to resort to any means of struggle, including the tactics of "quiet sapping," to penetrate into the collective farm and to carry on his wrecking activities. By these same tactics of "quiet sapping" hostile class elements penetrate into the Party in order thereby to camouflage themselves better. But in this too they will fail. The Party purging will expose them.

That is why the first point of the decision of the Central Committee and of the Central Control Commission says that those to be expelled are first of all:

> "Elements of an alien and hostile class who have made their way into the Party by deceptive means and remained there in order to disintegrate the Party ranks."

That such elements have remained in the Party notwithstanding previous purgings, and that some managed to get in in the period of 1930-33 after the purging of 1929, was revealed by the purging of the rural Party organizations in the North Caucasus and in the Ukraine in the winter of 1932.

A striking example is provided by the group of Party workers in Armavir, in the North Caucasus:

The vice-chairman of the District Control Committee and District Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, Stalishnov, proved to be an ex-officer in the White Army, had voluntarily served as a staff captain in the forces of Bulak-Balakhovich, and had served with Petlura.

The manager of the Municipal Services Department,

Kunin, was the son of a former big ship-owner, was educated at the Cossack Cadet School in 1917, served with Skoropadsky, then joined the Red Army, took part in a conspiracy against the Soviet Government, then deserted to the Whites, served in officers' regiments, after the defeat of the White armies remained in Krasnodar as a ranker, and in 1920 joined the Party without relating his past.

The manager of the District Land Department, Boldirev, and the chairman of the Automobile and Road Society, (Avtodor) Pries, were members of the Party since 1920, but in 1919-20 they had served with Kolchak.

A number of similar alien characters were found in other districts.

It cannot be said that this category of people is a numerous one. But these are bitter enemies of the proletarian dictatorship who got into the Party for the deliberate purpose of camouflaging their organized struggle against the Soviet Government. These people manage to penetrate into the factories, put on a soiled workers' blouse, obtain a Party membership card and deceive the working class and its Party. All workers and all honest toilers must help to expose these enemies.

The scope of the Party purging would be very restricted indeed if it were limited only to these open class enemies who had penetrated into the Party by deceptive means and if it did not expose all those elements who, although they did not come from alien classes, nevertheless, by their very nature, by their attitude towards the policy of the Party, are the agents in the Party of hostile classes.

Throughout the whole course of its history our Party has untiringly fought against these elements, has always been able to reveal and expose and to drag out

into the light of day, not only those who have openly and straightforwardly opposed the Party, but also those opportunists who in a Menshevik way were able to adapt themselves to the situation, to the "tendencies of the times" and who concealed their opportunist nature by empty, deceptive phrases.

In the present situation, when the victory of the general line of our Party and the indisputable victories of industrialization and of the collective farm movement are generally recognized, the Trotskyists, the Right deviationists and opportunists, and the elements that advocated conciliation with them are in the position of not being able to attack the Party and the Central Committee openly. That is why they are adopting new forms of struggle. Verbally, they agree with the Party line, but in fact, they sabotage and disrupt it. In this they are merely reflecting the new tactics adopted by their masters, by those that inspire them, the kulaks and other capitalist elements who, as I have said just now, have changed their tactics, and instead of open attack are now resorting to "quiet sapping." These are double-dealers.

Duplicity is nothing more nor less than the introduction into the ranks of the Party, into the ranks of the proletariat, of the old, bourgeois, kulak "virtue"; for deception, hypocrisy and duplicity were regarded as virtues by the bourgeoisie, by the merchants and kulaks. The kulak or the merchant who did not cheat was regarded as not having "self-respect." It is not for nothing that we have the old merchant, kulak proverb: "if you don't cheat you don't sell." Duplicity is a kulak and merchant ethic. A man who is capable of duplicity, who is capable of concealing his real opinions from the Party by means of deception, will eventually take the path of betraying the Party.

We have a number of living examples of this among

the Trotskyists and Right deviationists. After the Party had defeated them in open battle, after they had been exposed as the agents of the enemy class, these people got back into the Party by deceptive means, declaring that they had given up their former views. Notwithstanding these declarations however, many of them again took the path of underground factional work and of organizing counter-revolutionary groups. Our Party is the fighting Party of the revolutionary proletariat and it cannot, has not, and will never permit itself to be deceived. We have exposed and will expose, we have driven out and will continue to drive out all those who take it upon themselves to deceive the great Party of Lenin.

That is why the second point of the decision of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission definitely states that there must be expelled from the Party:

> "Double-dealers who live by deceiving the Party, who hide from it their real aspirations and under cover of a false oath of 'allegiance' to the Party, are attempting in reality to disrupt the Party's policy."

The question of Party discipline and State discipline should occupy an exceptionally important place in the present purging. Discipline has always been the cornerstone of the edifice of our Party.

"He who in the least degree weakens the iron discipline of the Party of the proletariat (particularly during its dictatorship) in fact assists the bourgeoisie against the proletariat." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXV, Russian edition, p. 191.)

It is precisely from this point of view that the Party has always fought against factions and groups, for the strictest observance of discipline, for the complete and

implicit fulfilment of the decisions of the Party. And in so far as the Party guides the Soviet State, the Party demands that its members should display exemplary conduct in fulfilling the decisions of the organs of the State. For example, the Party with particular vigilance has stood and stands today for the preservation of the discipline of the Red Army. At the present time, when its decisions find material expression in concrete plans for socialist economic administration, the Party demands from its members not merely that they should agree with its decisions, but that they should practically carry out the decisions of the Party and of the Government, and of the plans laid down by the Party and the Government, and it demands that they should actively fight against the non-fulfilment of these decisions and plans.

In the same way as loyalty, devotion and discipline at the front in wartime was not tested merely by whether one agreed with this or that Party instruction, or general strategical plan, but by the real fight that was made for winning this or that position, for dislodging the enemy from the positions he held, so today, the devotion, loyalty and discipline of a member of the Party is tested, not by his general agreement "in principle" with the general line of the Party, but by the concrete fight he puts up for the material content of the general line, for fulfilling the plans of socialist construction.

Nevertheless, there are Party members who are not only unable to carry out the plans laid down by the Party and the Government, but consider it quite "legitimate" and permissible to discuss the question as to the feasibility of the plans, to throw doubt on the possibility of carrying out these plans, and instead of mobilizing the masses they are leading, they disorganize them by idle talk about the plans being unfeasible.

That was the case, for example, in a number of districts in regard to the fulfilment of the grain collecting plan. This is what happens in industry, in the factories, in the mines, in the transport system.

This is precisely why the third point in the decision of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission has been included, *viz.*, that the Party must be purged of:

> "Open and hidden violators of the iron discipline of the Party and the State, who do not fulfil the decisions of the Party and the Government, who throw doubt upon and discredit the decisions passed and plans drawn up by the Party, by idle talk about their being 'unreal' and unrealizable."

The Party has always untiringly purged its ranks of those who have degenerated, who have become merged with bourgeois elements, of careerists and self-seekers, of those who have become morally corrupt. It would be wrong however to think that there are no more elements of this kind in our Party. Today dust may be wiped off not only with a rag and water, but even with kerosene and tomorrow dust will have again collected. It must be systematically cleaned. In the decision of the Central Committee and Central Control Commission, this pernicious "dust," these elements are given considerable space. It says the Party must be purged of:

> "Persons who had degenerated and merged with bourgeois elements, who do not want to conduct a real fight against the class enemies, who do not really combat the kulak elements, the grabbers, loafers, thieves and plunderers of public property;
>
> "Careerists, self-seekers and bureaucratized elements who utilize their Party membership and their employment in Soviet State service for their

own aims of personal self-seeking, who have lost contact with the masses and ignore the needs and requirements of the workers and peasants;

"The moral degenerates who by their discreditable conduct lower the dignity of the Party, besmirch the banner of the Party."

The Party has always fought against these elements, but the decision of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission emphasizes their special features at the present stage. A degenerate for example, reveals himself at the present time in the fact that he does not see, or does not want to see the class enemy, he does not want to fight the class enemy. This lack of desire to fight the class enemy manifests itself most strikingly, for example, in the question of combatting the stealing of socialist property. He refuses to understand that at the present time the stealing of socialist property is one of the principal methods of struggle employed by the class enemy, that the disruption of collective farms, wage grabbing, loafing and thieving is one of the most important weapons, almost the last weapon of the kulak in his fight against the victorious collective farm system. The degenerate refuses to see this and refuses to fight against it.

The same thing must be said in regard to those degenerates who become merged with wrecking elements. Although not wreckers themselves, they, instead of exercising class, proletarian vigilance, the display of which should be the special hall mark of the Bolshevik, instead of a healthy distrust towards these elements, become so merged with the alien environment, with the alien bourgeois and petty-bourgeois elements that they do not regard them as enemies.

The degenerate refuses to see that the kulak who manages to get into a factory, disrupts the work there, breaks the discipline of production and steals the goods

belonging to the factory. The degenerate regards all this as a common, harmless thing, and in fact, fails to combat the disruption of production.

In trading institutions and co-operative stores the degenerate does not fight for the protection of socialist property, he encourages the "Nepman spirit" and squanders public property.

Not less dangerous are Communists who have become bureaucratized, who have lost their class intuition and are captives of the alien elements in their organizations, who have become divorced from the masses and are in fact incapable of securing the carrying out of Party directives. Often, these elements rush from one extreme to the other. At one moment they fail to see the class enemy, agree with him and aid him; the next moment they begin right and left to commit all sorts of extreme acts, and like Shchedrin's famous hero, get carried away by their "administrative" power, they violate the laws laid down by the Soviet Government, commit illegal acts and acts of tyranny.

Directly connected with this category of degenerates is the fifth category, *i.e.*, careerists, self-seekers, people who have become bureaucratized and divorced from the workers and peasants. All these people place their own personal, selfish interests at the centre of their work.

This category, like the previously mentioned category of degenerates, some because their class intuition has become blunted, and some because of their self-seeking interests, corrupt the Soviet apparatus and disrupt and sabotage Party directives.

The exposure and combing out of these careerists, self-seekers and bureaucrats, and also the sixth category, the morally degenerate, is the most important task of the purging commissions.

The purging commissions must approach their work

with the seriousness, care and sensitiveness that is characteristic of a Bolshevik. It is necessary to avoid beforehand all stereotyped and mechanical methods of approach. Every member of a purging commission must approach each comrade undergoing examination with particular care and attention. The purging must clear out the incorrigibles who "have not justified the lofty calling of Party member," and it should re-educate and raise those who can be corrected and who can get rid of the defects they have suffered from up till now.

The work of the purging commissions is exceptionally responsible work. Perhaps it is the most responsible and difficult work there is, because they have to deal with human beings. This requires considerable consistency, persistence, firmness of character, and at the same time, considerable sensitiveness, patience, the ability to approach a man or woman not in a formal way, but in a way that will get to the facts of the case, not to go into pettifogging details, the ability to determine what is most important and characteristic of the given member of the Party.

The broad masses of the workers and peasants must be enlisted for this work of purging the Party. Every Party member must understand that the Party purging is not only the business of the commission, but that he must himself take an active part in it.

Our Party is purging itself in order that it may improve its fighting capacity, in order that it may become a sharper weapon, in order that the hammer of the Party may be able to forge better weapons, in order to improve the work of our apparatus, in order that our economy may develop better, in order to eradicate bureaucracy and red tape the quicker, in order that the masses of workers and peasants may live better. That is why we are organizing the Party purge. *(Applause.)*

III

THE PARTY PURGE AND THE RAISING OF THE IDEOLOGICAL LEVEL OF THE PARTY MEMBERS.

In the course of this purging we are adopting a measure that was not adopted in previous purgings, that is, reducing members to the position of candidates or sympathizers.

During the past few years an enormous number of new members have joined the Party who are full of enthusiasm for construction and who are striving sincerely and honestly to help our Party in its difficult work for the great reconstruction of the country. But a section of these, having joined the Party, do not yet satisfy the minimum of what is required of every member or candidate of the Bolshevik Party.

Among the *candidates* for example, there are such who have not only failed to acquire a knowledge of fundamental political principles, but have not even acquired that degree of stability, consistency and Party discipline that is required of a member or candidate of the Communist Party. While not regarding such people as having been combed out—because they have not acted in an anti-Party way, they work honestly and devotedly in the factory or in the collective farm, they merely require supplementary education in order to justify the lofty calling of member or candidate of the Party—such comrades should for a time be reduced to the category of sympathizers.

The comrades who will be reduced to the position of

sympathizers will be organized into sympathizers' groups attached to the Party nucleus. The doors of the Party are not closed to them: first of all the sympathizer group is, as it were, the threshold of the Party, and secondly, they can in a year's time make application to be restored as a member or candidate of the Party.

The same method of approach must be applied to those *Party members* who are loyal to the Party, but who lack elementary political knowledge of the aims and the program of the Party, of its policy and its most important decisions. Such members should be temporarily reduced to the position of candidates in order that they may improve their political education. They, too, will be given the opportunity, after one year, to be restored to membership if during this time they have managed to improve their political knowledge.

Of course, it is clear, that the purging commissions will not approach the Party members as examiners of high-school students. We must not put tricky examination questions to Party members and demand that every member of the Party, and particularly the rank and file worker and collective farmer, should know all details with the utmost precision.

There are Party members who understand fundamentals, who understand what the Party is striving for, who understand the substance of our program, understand the essence of the class struggle, but cannot always sufficiently clearly and connectedly expound what they understand. And sometimes it happens even that a man knew everything before the purging, understood everything, and yet at the purging becomes confused, as at an examination, everything goes out of his head, and he can say nothing.

Now it is in just such a case that the purging commission must go into the facts of the case, take into account the general level of the given Party member or

candidate, and try to create an atmosphere in which the member or candidate will not feel as if he were a schoolboy at an examination, will not be afraid that he will be caught on some formula, or that "tricky" questions will be put to him. There must be less demand for formal knowledge, of eloquent exposition, and more insight into the actual position.

But at the same time we must not permit a state of affairs in which a member or candidate of the Party does not understand the simplest things about the aims and tasks of our Party, of what it is striving for and how, and against whom outside of the Party and within it the Party is fighting. If a member or candidate does not know these elementary things then of course, however unpleasant it may be for them, the Party must say to them: "First of all get some political education, and then you will become a full member of the vanguard Party."

Taken by itself, the presentation of the question of reducing a Party member to the position of candidate, and of a candidate to the position of sympathizer, for not knowing elementary political questions does not imply that we are making excessive demands upon a member or candidate called forth by unusual circumstances, but that we are making quite normal demands upon members of a leading Party who, even when they join the Party, should distinguish themselves from non-Party workers precisely by the fact that they are more class-conscious and more advanced. The non-Party worker has a perfect right to say to any member or candidate of the Party: "Well, you have joined the Party, that means that you are more class-conscious than I am. Tell me then, what are the aims of the Bolshevik Party? Explain to me what this or that Party decision means." What sort of a member or a candidate of the Party can it be if he cannot reply

to the simplest questions put to him by non-Party workers? It is clear, of course, that such a person must first of all get some political education and then join the Party, or, if he is already in the Party, he must exert every effort, at an accelerated tempo, as a Bolshevik should, to acquire the minimum of knowledge and understanding of the nature of our Party without which the Party member or candidate cannot be a vanguard fighter in the fullest sense of the word.

During the past few years the Party has done an enormous amount of work to raise the ideological level of the members of the Party, to spread knowledge and to organize Party schools. The Party has improved its teaching staff, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The Party purging will make it possible to improve this work still more; but I think that in regard to learning the program, the rules and the most important decisions of the Party, we will achieve results in the course of the six months that the purging will take place that took a couple of years of normal propaganda work to achieve.

The more so that already, before the purging, people are concentrating on the really fundamental questions and not as has been the case in certain Party schools, where certain teachers, instead of explaining in a simple and clear manner the minimum of fundamental questions that a member or candidate of the Party should understand, begin their explanation of the nature of the capitalist system with a "profound" analysis of commodity fetishism. Apparently, these worthy teachers thought that they were "no worse than Marx." If Marx commenced his *Capital* with commodity fetishism, why should not they start their lessons with commodity fetishism? *(Laughter.)*

Of course, one should know what commodity fetishism is; this, too, is important and very good; but it is

no use starting with that. At all events, it is to be hoped that our purging commissions will not, in testing the knowledge of the Party members, start with commodity fetishism. *(Laughter.)*

I will not deal in detail with the demands in regard to political knowledge which should be made upon a member or candidate of the Party.

We cannot expect every member of the Party to know the theory of imperialism, that he should be able to deliver a lecture on world economy and the revolutionary situation as well as say, for example, a student of the World Economics Institute of Red Professors. But a member of the Party should know what capitalism is, and why it must inevitably collapse. Our belief in socialism differs from religious belief precisely in the fact that our belief is scientific, it is based on knowledge. We believe in socialism, not merely because we desire it; we believe in it because we see, on the basis of a scientific, Marxian-Leninist analysis, the inevitable downfall of capitalism, the inevitable victory of socialism. And we must understand that the downfall of capitalism is inevitable, not merely for the sake of understanding, not merely to satisfy our curiosity, but in order to be better equipped, better armed in the struggle against capitalism, in the struggle against those who in fact are helping capitalism and support it.

Or take another question. You know about the controversies that occurred between the Oppositionists and the Party on the possibility of the victory of socialism in a single country—concretely, in our country. Of course, the majority of the proletarians, even those who do not understand theory very well, immediately realized that the very fact that the Oppositionists raised the question of the impossibility of building up socialism in our country was false and

treacherous. In his simple way, every honest proletarian reasoned as follows: "If it is not possible to build up socialism in our country, then what was the use of having made all this fuss, what was the use of having made the October Revolution?"

However, in order to be sufficiently equipped to be able to expose the bourgeois Trotskyist negation of the possibility of building up socialism in a single country, it is necessary to know, at least in main outline, that the negation of the fundamental theoretical postulate of the possibility of the victory of socialism in a single country implies slipping right down to the bourgeois, Menshevik position of the Second International, the abandonment of the gains of the October Revolution, and the return to capitalism. It required the exceptional theoretical penetration and persistence of Comrade Stalin to withstand the attacks against the teachings of Lenin.

In order that a member of the Party may be firm (and to be firm means not to shrink before difficulties, to be able to swim against the tide, to be able to lead the backward) it is not sufficient merely to desire to be firm; it is necessary to understand that we are waging a struggle, not only for petty, everyday interests, but that we as a party of Bolsheviks differ from other parties—which call themselves workers' parties but which are really petty-bourgeois and bourgeois parties — by the fact that we have been able throughout the whole course of our history to link up the struggle for daily interests with the struggle for the great aims, for socialism; that we are able, when necessary, to subordinate the interests of the day to the interests of the final victory even at the price of overcoming temporary difficulties and privations.

When we were preparing to storm the bourgeois State in 1917, the Mensheviks tried to frighten us with

their forecasts of difficulties, defeats, bloodshed and doom. The Party, led by Comrade Lenin, was not afraid of difficulties, led the proletariat into battle and defeated the enemy. When the Party, led by Comrade Stalin, was leading the proletariat to storm the economic foundations of capitalism, when the Party was waging an extended offensive against the capitalist elements, the Trotskyists, the Right deviationists and all sorts of Oppositionists, tried to frighten us with difficulties, defeats and a lot of other frightful words. The industrialization of the country and the collectivization of agriculture is a very difficult task. The fulfilment of the first Five-Year Plan cost enormous effort. Why did the Party and the Central Committee lead the masses into battle and in spite of difficulties organize them for the purpose of industrializing the country and collectivizing agriculture? Because the Party, and in the first place its leader Comrade Stalin, saw theoretically that if we proceed along the path proposed by the Trotskyists and the Right Opportunists then we will never reach socialism, but that the proletarian dictatorship would be doomed. It is not sufficient to capture political power, it is not sufficient to expel the capitalists; the very roots from which capitalism springs must be torn up. The whole economy of the country must be reconstructed.

It was thanks to the profoundly correct theoretical understanding of the nature of the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat that the Party was able to defeat the anti-Leninist theories and policies of the Trotskyists and Right deviationists which led to the restoration of capitalism, that the Party was able to lead the country on to the broad road of socialist construction, strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat and strengthen the alliance between the working class and the peasantry. The Party achieved this by the firm applica-

tion of the whole might of the proletarian dictatorship for the suppression of the class enemies, by the able application of the whole of the organizing forces of the proletarian State for the cause of the socialist reconstruction of the country and for the strengthening of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry on a higher basis, on the basis of collectivization and mechanization of agriculture.

To be a loyal member of the Party, not to retreat from the Party line, to fight against deviations, does not simply mean desiring to be such; it means that one must be able to understand the fundamental questions concerning the aims, the tasks and the policy of the Party.

Our Party is irreconcilable towards those who retreat from the theoretical principles and policy of the Party.

Why does not our Party tolerate factionalism in its ranks? The opportunists, from the Mensheviks to the internal Party Oppositionists, have always issued the motto "live and let live," in other words, permit differences of opinion and numerous centres in the Party. They even tried to argue that this would be of great benefit to the Party, for "out of a multitude of opinions truth is born."

In order that a member of the Party may be able to put up a firm resistance to such arguments he must understand the nature of our Party.

He must understand that although differences of opinion, cross purposes, indiscipline and factionalism were and are permitted in petty-bourgeois parties, in parties whose chief aim is to get the greatest possible number of parliamentary seats, to be an echo, "a loyal opposition" to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie—our Party, the Party that organized a great revolutionary army and is leading it in the decisive battle for socialism, for communism, the Party of the dictatorship of

the proletariat cannot permit cross purposes in its midst, or factions or groups. Our Party organizes its forces on a monolithic basis.

Our Party, in its decisions and through the mouth of Comrade Stalin, has more than once emphasized the necessity for the wide development of self-criticism, for the wide development of internal Party democracy, for the wide development of the activity and initiative of the Party members. The Party purging itself is an expression of self-criticism.

During the past few years self-criticism has developed in the Party and in the working class as it has never done before on the basis of the increased activity and initiative of the Party members, on the basis of socialist competition and the activity of the young workers. The Party has roused new masses of toilers to active participation in the great work of building up socialism. Our self-criticism, our internal Party democracy, are directed against the revisionists, against the opportunists, are used for tightening up Party discipline, for strengthening the Party ranks, for mobilizing all forces for successful progress, for the successful struggle for the complete victory of socialism in our country and throughout the world. *(Applause.)*

The Oppositionists of various colours tried to frighten us with the bogey of a split in the Party. We would have had not only a split, but the complete collapse of the Party had the Party given way to the moods of these miserable deserters and traitors. It is precisely because we ruthlessly expelled the Oppositionists and factionalists from our ranks that at the present time, in 1933, our Bolshevik Party is more powerful and united than it has ever been before. *(Loud Applause.)*

Our Party is better equipped than ever it was before

for firm and unswerving progress. As a result of the victories of the first Five-Year Plan we now have every possibility of raising our country to the proper height in the shortest possible time. Particularly does this apply to agriculture, in which, thanks to the exceptional attention, care and political organization devoted to it by the Party and primarily by Comrade Stalin, we now have very decisive changes. Considerable difficulties have still to be encountered in this sphere, but thanks to the systematic increase in the technical equipment and the improved organization, thanks to the thousands of organizers that we have sent into the countryside, we already see that the sowing this year is proceeding in a much better and more organized manner than was the case last year. We now have every possibility of carrying out the weeding, the harvesting and the grain collecting campaigns better than we carried them out in past years. Everything depends upon ourselves, upon our work, upon our ability, and we are sure that the Party and the masses that follow its lead will raise our agriculture to a still higher level. *(Applause.)*

This requires still further improvement in the work of the Party, the purging of its ranks of unfit elements. The purging must not only raise every individual member, it must raise the work of all our Party organizations and remove all the defects they still suffer from.

Our Moscow organization achieved considerable successes during the past few years. However, the defects that are observed in the work of the Party organizations throughout our Union are also observed in our Moscow organization. Our task is, as a result of the purging, to raise the work of our Party organization in the capital to a still higher level.

I am sure that the Moscow organization of Bolsheviks, that all the Bolsheviks in the Moscow region, and

the whole of our Party, will set an example in the period of the purging, will show that they are capable of purging themselves and at the same time of improving the quality of their work. *(Applause.)*

The Party purge should still further strengthen, still further raise and still further unite the many million members of our glorious Party and the vast masses of the toilers around the Leninist Central Committee and around Comrade Stalin, the great leader of our Party and of the working class, who made these victories possible. *(Loud Applause.)*

The purging of the Party will once again show our enemies and friends that our Party is not afraid of the obstacles that stand in the path of progress of the working class towards the world proletarian revolution, towards the complete victory of socialism. *(Loud applause, rising into an ovation.)*